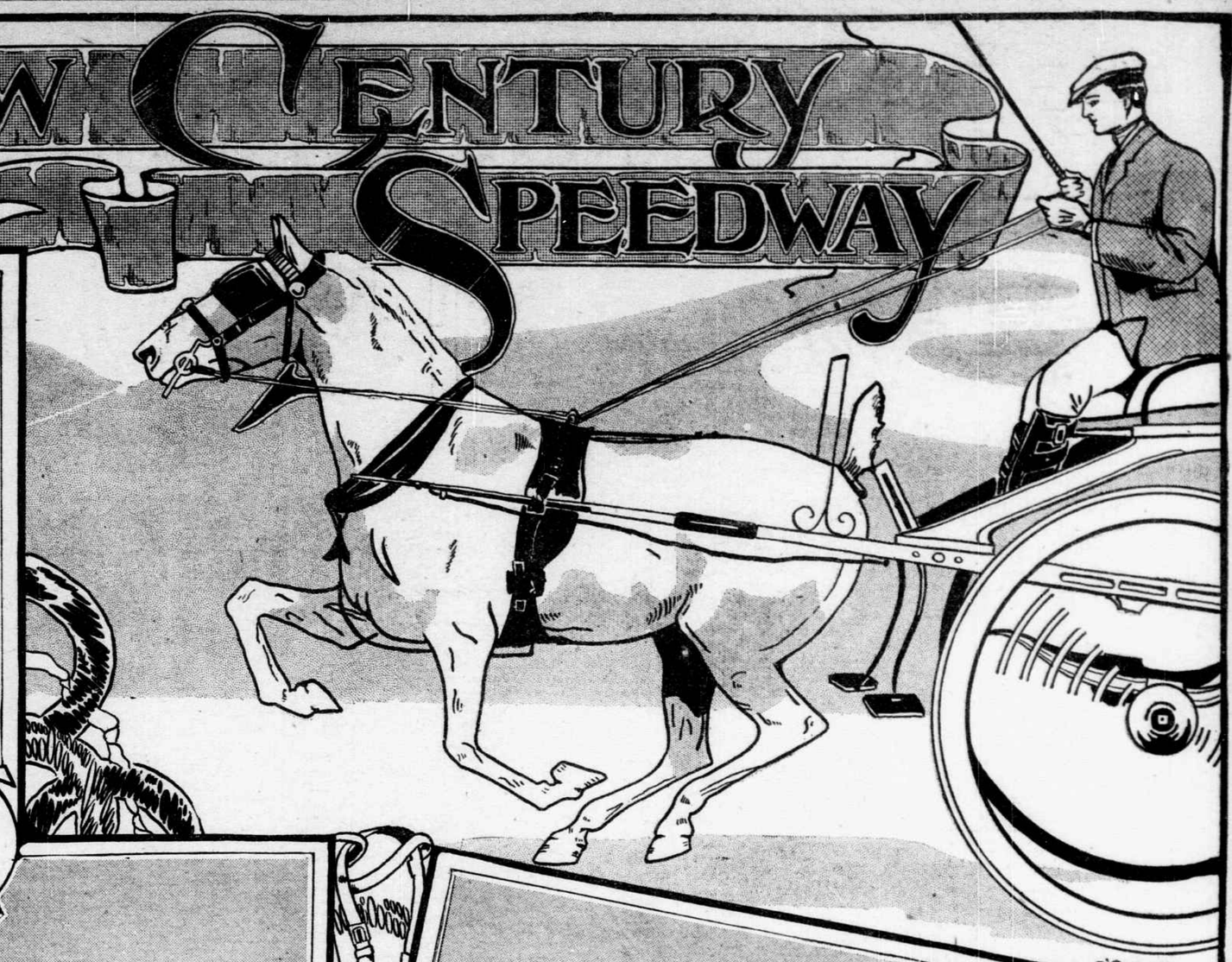
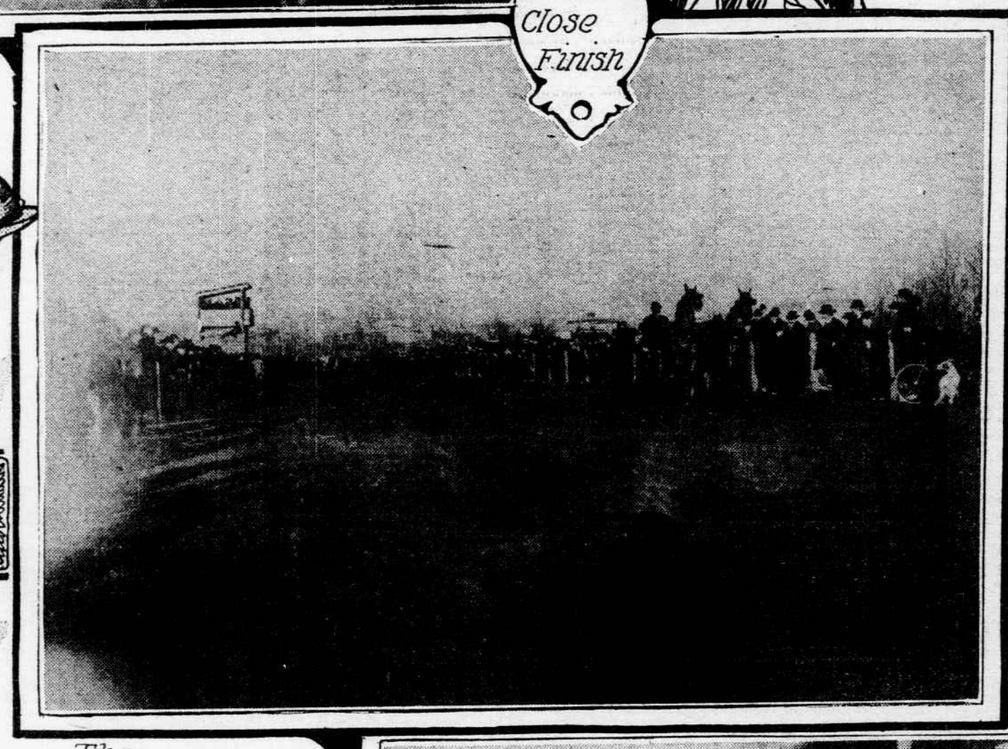
On the New Century Speedway

A Close Finish





The "Stretch"

Interested Spectators

Around the Judges' Stand

THAT the New Century speedway which the horse lovers of Washington have recently built along the Potomac Park, west of the tidal basin, and which was opened to the public on the 12th of December, will surely bring about a great improvement in the class of horses used in the city for pleasure purposes can not be doubted by those who have visited the speedway the pleasant afternoons of the past month. Thousands of persons from all walks in life go to see the horses speed over the course and to enjoy the impromptu races that take place. While Wednesday and Saturday afternoons from 3 to 5:30 o'clock are supposed to be the days for these "matinees," as the horse owners call them, yet there is hardly an afternoon of any day that a dozen or more owners of speedy horses are not out trying the speed of their animals on the beautiful driveway.

Among the visitors to the speedway on these afternoons are many ladies, who seem to take as much interest in the horses as do the masculine visitors, and who are as enthusiastic over the sport as the men.

Except for regular meets—which so far have taken place only on the opening day, and on the holidays since—no general program of racing is arranged, but friendly dashes, impromptu affairs arranged by the owners and drivers, of a half and three-quarters of a mile take place. No time is taken and there are no rules as to weights and the like, but the spectators enjoy themselves as much as if they were at Benning on one of the big days of the season.

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Nearly all the fine and speedy horses owned in Washington are brought to the speedway for exercise and a good working out, and among them may be seen Kitty Wells, owned by Charles Chick; Robin Hood, Bedford Boy, or Bedworth, jr., belonging to the Javins Bros.; Irish Jack, or Costairs, owned by E. E. Taylor; Buck Shot, owned by Jack Keane; Harry Woodford, owned by B. F. McCaully; Cascade, owned by S. R. Collins; Comanche Boy, owned by James Bean, and many others, all of whom are noted for their speed and have records under 2.30. These horses are pitted against each other at the matinees, and come down the course with expanded nostrils and outstretched necks straining every muscle to win, and seeming to enjoy the sport as much as do their drivers and the onlookers.

The speedway trials are confined to trotting and pacing, and no vehicle with a top on it is allowed on the speedway during the matinee hours, but the vehicles used vary from the most modern and stylish type of racing buggy or sulky to the ordinary heavy buggy. While the owners of fast horses are the main patrons of the speedway, it is open to any horse owner who wishes to try the speed of his animal, and many take advantage of the beautiful track to bring their horses over and give them a trying out.

Under the rules of the Road Drivers and Riders' Association no betting is allowed on the track, and if any of it is done it is without the consent of those in control of the speedway.

In speaking of the horses that are brought to the track mention should be made of the fine team belonging to Mr. Charles McDermott, who is a horse enthusiast, and to whom much of the credit for the building of the speedway is attributed. Mr. McDermott is a frequent visitor to the track, driving Marion Wilkes and the Dean, both beautiful and speedy animals, the former having a record of 2.08¾, and the latter 2.19¼. This team is said to be one of the fastest pole teams in the country, and its performances on the speedway lead the local horsemen to think it will become the greatest pole team in America. To realize this possibility is said to be Mr. McDermott's ambition.

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The new speedway is a place of joy to the horse lovers of the city, for there they can speed their horses to their hearts' content and no one will say them nay. It is a permanency in Washington life, and will be improved and made more attractive as the years pass, and will be embodied in the plans for the improvement of that portion of the Potomac Park in which it is located.

The Century speedway was built as the result of the desire on the part of the owners of fast horses in the city to have some place where they could speed their animals without danger of being arrested for fast driving. Holding the reins over a fast horse the irresistible desire to let him go would overcome the most level-headed driver at times when on unfrequented roads about the city, and in many instances arrests resulted. The horse lovers wished for some place where they could "let 'em go" without interference.

One afternoon, about two years ago, a party of horsemen were discussing the need of such a driveway, and it was suggested that one be built. Mr. P. V. DeGraw, now fourth assistant postmaster general, was one of the party. "If you will stand by me I think I can secure a place where we can build a speedway," said Mr. DeGraw. The promise was given and Mr. DeGraw enlisted the sympathy of Col. T. W. Simonds, then superintendent of public buildings and grounds, and of Col. Alexander McKenzie, chief of engineers, United States army, who authorized the use of that portion of the Potomac Park lying between 19th and 23d streets and B street and the river for the proposed project.

The association was then organized with Gen. Nelson A. Miles as president and Mr. DeGraw as secretary, and the work of cleaning up and grading what was a swamp of thick undergrowth was started. About $2,500 had been expended when a considerable portion of the new work was covered by a foot or two of mud from a dredging machine at work deepening the channel in the river and at the same time raising the grade of the park. The work was being done by contract that called for the depositing of the material on that particular portion of the park, so that there was no help for it.

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After this disaster a large number of the friends of the speedway lost interest, and the building work was practically abandoned for several months.

Finally, however, Mr. DeGraw, assisted by other members of the association and aided by District Commissioner Biddle, secured the cinders from several of the government departments and large establishments in the city, and these were spread over the course, raising the greater portion of it above the level of any future floodings during dredging operations on the river.

The problem was, however, how to raise funds to complete the speedway, making it a hundred feet wide, as designed. Things were looking very unfavorable for the success of the undertaking when Mr. Charles McDermott, the contractor, came forward and, being a lover of horses, undertook to complete the work with his men and at his own expense. The result of his work is seen in the fine speedway now in service.

The Century speedway is built of cinders about two feet thick, and is said to be one of the finest roadways of its kind in the country. About a mile long, it extends from 23d street at B street to the river, along the river to 19th street, then north on 19th street to B street, which is used on the return to the starting point at 23d street.

The Road Drivers and Riders' Association has about 150 members, and among them are some of the best-known horse owners of the city and others who are interested in the development of speedy horses from love of the animal. The objects of the association, as set forth in its by-laws, are as follows:

"To provide pleasure for its members by maintaining a speedway in Washington.

"To give and control friendly contests of speed between gentlemen drivers.

"To establish a fraternal feeling among pleasure drivers and riders for mutual benefit and the promotion of health and vigor.

"To maintain harmonious relations with other driving and riding organizations.

"To foster and protect the interests of its members and aid in the maintenance of good roads and bridle paths."

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The officers of the association are:

Honorary president, Lieut. Gen. Nelson A. Miles, U. S. A., retired; president, P. V. DeGraw; first vice president, Col. Chas. S. Bromwell; second vice president, Col. Thomas W. Symons; third vice president, E. E. Taylor, sr.; fourth vice president, Robert Callahan, sr.; fifth vice president, John O. Green, jr.; secretary, J. May Morrison; treasurer, Edward H. Droop.

Board of directors—Chas. McDermott, Joseph Cranford, Percy Cranford, Thomas Bond, John H. Gheen, Charles White, D. Lincoln, E. E. Taylor, jr., John W. Preston, Prof. J. E. Gale, L. McCormick, F. H. Javins, A. G. Brooke, Dr. J. D. Robinson, Col. C. E. Hartung.

Executive committee—P. V. McGraw, chairman; E. H. Droop, J. May Morrison, Chas. McDermott, Charles White, E. E. Taylor, jr., F. H. Javins, Dr. J. D. Robinson.

Committee on speedway—J. May Morrison, chairman; E. E. Taylor, secretary; Chas. McDermott, Charles White, A. G. Brooke, F. H. Javins, John O. Gheen, Prof. J. E. Gale, Percival M. Brown.

The following is a complete list of the active members of the association:

Geo. A. Armes, S. C. Briggs, Conrad Becker, Col. John Biddle, Thomas M. Bond, H. W. Blanchard, P. M. Brown, Robert Callahan, Robert Callahan, jr., H. P. Chapman, L. A. Clagett, L. S. Cleaves, H. Copperthite, C. I. Corby, E. B. DeGraw, P. V. DeGraw, P. H. Dels, Claas Denekas, E. H. Droop, Dr. H. O. Duffy, E. Baker Evans, Frank M. Finley, Ernst Gerstenberg, Benj. S. Graves, John H. Gheen, John E. Gale, B. W. Gheen, Peter H. Heiskell, J. V. N. Huyck, E. Allen Harris, J. T. Hunter, E. Lodge Hill, Frank Javins, John Javins, Hugh S. Legare, B. F. McCaully, Martin McNamara, Nelson A. Miles, R. J. Marshall, J. May Morrison, L. E. Payson, John W. Preston, Samuel Ross, Frank K. Raymond, J. D. Robinson, John E. Reyburn, L. D. Sale, E. T. Simpson, Dr. J. A. Stoutenburgh, N. B. Scott, Moses Sinsheimer, W. L. Shepherd, P. J. Steubner, Thomas W. Symons, E. E. Taylor, E. E. Taylor, jr., W. E. Van Deusen, H. L. West, C. McR. Winslow, Chas. White, J. W. Weber, Joseph I. Weller, Thomas F. Walsh, George Zurhorst, Charles McDermott, Jas. J. McCarthy, Michael Morris, M. W. Mitchell, Wm. Morris, J. T. Menehan, G. B. Mullin, H. E. Nicholas, O'Day & Savage, J. J. O'Keefe, J. L. Pugh, jr., L. A. Poole, C. F. Ruppert, W. H. Richardson, E. I. Smith, Ewald Schneider, John Summers, F. X. Stonestreet, L. Stabler, E. G. Schaefer, Harry Schlegel, Peter Taylor, jr., W. E. Trutor, Frank Thomas, W. E. Van Deusen, Wm. A. Vaugh, H. T. Wheeler, D. S. Williamson, J. W. Webber, P. F. Waters, Wm. Weaver, S. L. Waters, R. D. Wright, R. F. Wright, jr., W. E. Warner, and Wm. Wentzel. Robert Allen, L. Racker, W. T. Austin, Samuel Bensinger, A. G. Brooks, L. T. Brown, E. T. Barker, J. Ashly Cooper, Chas. J. Chick, W. H. Chambers, Harry L. Dudley, B. Einstein, F. G. Groff, Fred N. Geyer, Louis Hodges, C. E. Hartung, W. J. Hall, J. A. Jones, S. D. Lincoln, F. A. Lutz, Jos. McReynolds, W. Brown, Jas. W. Bean, A. L. Buckman, Gus Braehler, S. R. Collins, C. Chambers, L. A. Clarke, John F. Douglass, Dr. E. Ferneybough, John H. Gheen, Edward Gaines, H. S. Haight, Dr. C. F. Hadfield, Lee Heckinger, Eugene A. Jones, Chas. E. Kendrick, Austin Loftus, L. A. McCormick and W. A. McReynolds.

"Put Watts Into 'Em, Boys"

From the Princeton Alumni Weekly.

THE originator of "First in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen" was a Princeton graduate, as is more or less well known—Henry Lee of the class of 1773, "Light Horse Harry" of revolutionary fame, the father of Gen. Robert E. Lee—one of those, doubtless, whom Gen. Washington himself had in mind when he wrote to his adopted son, then a Princeton undergraduate, that "no college had turned out better scholars or more estimable characters than Nassau." Another friend of Washington, from whom also he had learned the quality of Princeton graduates of that heroic age, was the "rebel high priest," who "loved the Lord God—and hated King George," the "soldier parson" who at the battle of Springfield exhorted the ragged Continentals to "put Watts into 'em," the patriot preacher whom Bret Harte has commemorated in his poem:

CALDWELL OF SPRINGFIELD, N. J., 1780.

Here's the spot. Look around you. Above on the height
Lay the Hessians encamped. By the church on the right
Stood the gaunt Jersey farmers. And here ran a wall—
You may dig anywhere and you'll turn up a ball.

Nothing more. Grasses spring, waters flow, flowers blow
Pretty much as they did ninety-three years ago.

Nothing more did I say? Stay a moment. You've heard
Of Caldwell, the parson, who once preached the Word
Down at Springfield? What? No! Come, that's bad. Why, he had
All the Jerseys aflame. And they gave him the name
Of the "rebel high priest." He stuck in their gorge,
For he loved the Lord God—and he hated King George.

He had cause, you might say! When the Hessians that day
Marched up with Knyphausen they stopped on their way
At the "Farms," where his wife, with a child in her arms,
Sat alone in the house. How it happened none knew
But God—and that one of the hireling crew
Who fired the shot. Enough! There she lay,
And Caldwell, the chaplain, her husband, away!

Did he preach, did he pray? Think of him as you stand
By the old church today; think of him and that band
Of militant plow boys! See the smoke and the heat
Of the reckless advance—of that straggling retreat!
Keep the ghost of that wife, foully slain, in your view—
And what could you—what should you, what would you do?

Why, just what he did! They were left in the lurch
For the want of more wadding. He ran to the church,
Broke the door, stripped the pews, and dashed out in the road
With his arms full of hymn books and threw down his load
At their feet! Then above all the shouting and shots
Rang his voice: "Put Watts into 'em, boys; give 'em Watts!"

And they did. That is all. Grasses spring, flowers blow
Pretty much as they did ninety-three years ago.
You may dig anywhere and you'll turn up a ball,
But not always a hero like this—and that's all.

The Rev. James Caldwell was born in Charlotte county, Va., in April, 1734. His family was of French origin and became Huguenots during the Calvinistic reform in France. Following the revocation of the edict of Nantz they escaped to Scotland, where they lived upon an estate called Cold Well, from which, doubtless, the family took its name. Driven in turn from Scotland by religious persecutions, they fled to the north of Ireland, and early in the eighteenth century John Caldwell emigrated to America with his family, settling first in Lancaster county, Pa., and later in Charlotte county, Va., where James Caldwell was born, the youngest of the seven children of John Caldwell.

This youngest son was sent to Princeton, and before his graduation in 1759 he had been a student under three Princeton presidents, the Rev. Aaron Burr, who died in 1757; the Rev. Jonathan Edwards, who died in 1758, and the Rev. Samuel Davies, who succeeded to the office in 1759. The year after his graduation Caldwell was licensed as a probationer for the ministry and preached for a while in the Carolinas. He was ordained by the Presbytery of New Brunswick in 1761, and installed as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Elizabethtown, N. J. There he was married in 1763, his wife being Miss Hannah Ogden of Newark, whose tragic death led up to the incident recorded in Bret Harte's poem. There also he had as parishioners William Livingston, the governor of New Jersey, member of the Continental Congress, a Princeton trustee; Elias Boudinot, president of the Continental Congress, another trustee of Princeton; Abraham Clark, a signer of the Declaration of Independence; Robert Ogden of the class of 1765; Aaron Ogden, 1773, governor of New Jersey, United States senator, deputy quartermaster general of the United States army and a Princeton trustee; Jonathan Dayton of the class of 1776, member of the constitutional convention, United States senator, etc.; Francis Barber, 1767, and others who contributed to the founding of the nation.

Besides these, about forty commissioned officers and a large number of non-commissioned soldiers went forth from his congregation to fight the battles of the young republic. For at the outbreak of the revolution the pastor of the Elizabethtown church had ardently espoused the cause of independence; it is related that as he preached the gospel of peace in that period of strife his services were conducted with loaded pistols lying beside him in the pulpit.

It was natural, therefore, that early in the war this militant clergyman became the object of violent hatred on the part of the Tories. In 1776 he himself joined the New Jersey regiment as its chaplain. His regiment was stationed at Johnstown when the news of the Declaration of Independence reached it, and Col. Ebenezer Elmer has left this note of the ceremonies to which the arrival of the news gave rise, on the 15th of July, 1776: "At 12 o'clock the assembly was beat, that the men might parade in order to receive a treat, and drink the states' health. When, having made a barrel of grog, the Declaration was read and the following toast was given by Parson Caldwell: 'Harmony, honor and all prosperity to the free and independent United States of America—wise legislators—brave and victorious armies both by sea and land to the United States of America.' When three hearty cheers were given and the grog flew round again."

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Parson Caldwell's popularity with the patriots seems to have been equaled only by the enmity in which he was held by the enemies of the colonies. It is said that large rewards were offered for his capture, which accounts, doubtless, for the presence of the pistols in his pulpit. In the winter of 1779 his manse and church were burned by a marauding party and he moved his family to Connecticut Farms, now Union, N. J. On June 6, 1780, Gen. Knyphausen, commanding several thousand British troops, landed at Elizabethtown Point and proceeded into the interior, devastating the country as they marched and occupying Connecticut Farms. On the night previous to the attack Caldwell was at his home, but hearing of the approach of the enemy he mounted his horse and hurried to the quarters of Gen. Washington.

During his absence Mrs. Caldwell was shot by a British soldier, who fired through a window of the room in which she had sought refuge with her children. The houses of Connecticut Farms were then set on fire by the British. When Gen. Lafayette visited the graves of the Caldwells in Elizabethtown in 1824 he related that during the burning of Connecticut Farms he and Gen. Washington and Mr. Caldwell stood together on the heights of Springfield and Mr. Caldwell, looking at the smoke of the burning hamlet, expressed extreme satisfaction that he had had the forethought to remove his family to a place of safety, mistakingly thinking that the smoke was not in the direction of their temporary home.

The next day after the attack on Connecticut Farms, Mr. Caldwell found his wife dead. The tragedy so aroused the indignation of the Continentals that when Knyphausen attacked Springfield on the 25th of June, the defenders fought like demons. It was during this engagement that the waddling for the patriots' guns gave out and the "soldier parson," galloping to the village church, returned with his pockets and arms loaded with the hymns of Dr. Watts, and, flinging them to the soldiers, shouted: "Now put Watts into 'em, boys."

Mr. Caldwell added to his talents as a preacher and his enthusiasm as a patriot practical wisdom and business ability of a high order. This was demonstrated when the army having been reduced to dire straits, both with regard to payment for the services of the soldiers and provisions, the "rebel high priest" was appointed assistant commissary general of the New Jersey troops; and such was the confidence of the people in him that provisions were soon supplied upon whatever guarantee he could give as to remuneration. Over the door of Caldwell's office in Chatham were inscribed the letters D. Q. M. G.—deputy quarter master general—which gives point to the following anecdote of a visit to the commissary office by Abraham Clark, the signer of the Declaration and one of Caldwell's parishioners.

Perceiving Mr. Clark approaching, Caldwell went to meet him and found him intently studying the sign above the door. Upon being asked what he was looking at so earnestly, Clark replied that he was endeavoring to comprehend what the letters meant. "Well, what do you think they mean?" asked Caldwell. "I cannot conceive," replied his distinguished parishioner, "unless they mean Devilish Queer Minister of the Gospel."

Less than a year after the death of his wife the "soldier parson" was himself shot and killed by an American sentinel, one James Morgan, who, it was believed, was bribed to the outrage by Caldwell's enemies among the British. Morgan subsequently was convicted of murder and paid the penalty of his crime on the gallows. The murder occurred on Saturday, and many of the clergyman's flock, not having heard of the tragedy, went to the church to hear him preach as usual on Sunday morning. Instead, they found the body of their dead pastor lying in state in the open street before his house, and the sermon they heard was his funeral oration. It was delivered by the Rev. Alexander McWhorter of the class of 1757, who had been a fellow-student with Caldwell at Princeton and had served with him on the board of trustees of their Alma Mater. Mr. Caldwell was a member of the board from 1769 until his death, its secretary from 1772 to 1781 and the treasurer of the college from 1777 to 1779.

The Rev. James Caldwell and his wife lie buried side by side in the churchyard of the First Presbyterian Church of Elizabeth. The original slab which marked their graves is preserved in the walls of the church, and above the burial place is a white marble monument, which was placed there in 1835 by the Society of the Cincinnati and the citizens of Elizabeth.